"He that believeth shall not make haste."

A SERMON

PREACHED

ON THE FIRST OF JANUARY, 1865,

IN

ST. PAUL'S CHURCH, RICHMOND,

BY THE RECTOR,

REV. CHAS. MINNIGERODE, D. D.

[PUBLISHED BY REQUEST.]

RICHMOND:
CHAS. H. WYNNE, PRINTER.
1865.

In allowing this Sermon to be published, I would humbly pray, that it may prove as useful as my friends expect. I have added a few notes, which I hope will not be found uninteresting and serve as illustrations of the text.

C. M.

SERMON.

HE THAT BELIEVETH SHALL NOT MAKE HASTE.—*Isaiah* xxviii. 16.

MANY and glorious things are said of faith. It is the theme of the Christian pulpit, a subject which cannot be exhausted. It tells upon all the relations of life and gives character to every believer, whatever the circumstances be in which he may be placed. His whole life in its every manifestation, in thought, word and deed, in the inner sanctuary of his feelings and aspirations, in his outward bearing in the world and towards others, is developed from his position as a believer.

At peace with God through faith in Jesus Christ, he leans on the arm of Omnipotence and reposes on the bosom of Infinite Wisdom; and from these two premises follow, as their legitimate and blessed results, the two cardinal characteristics of the Christian: *humility* and true, calm, fearless *manliness*.

As he looks up to God, he finds a Father, a Father's love, a Father's faithfulness, a Father's home, and feels "the everlasting arms are underneath;" and trustfully, humbly he commits himself and all to Him to whom he has committed his highest, his eternal interests. Secure in that guardian care and covenanted love, he then descends into the relations of ordinary life, and enters cheerfully and zealously upon his daily duties and trials.

Supported by the promise, which for the real believer matures into fruition, of Christ's presence and ever-active sympathy; by the guiding power of Him that is greater than all that can be against him, by the Spirit that reveals to his own spirit more and more the unfailing love of Christ; secure in the highest guarantee, that "He who spared not his Son, but delivered him up for us all, shall surely with him freely give us all things," and the positive pledge "all things shall work together for good to them that love God:" he can harbour the hope, that—however weak and unworthy—he shall not utterly fall nor fail of his eternal portion; and in his intercourse with the world show himself A MAN in the fullest and highest sense of the word, a man sufficient for the duties and trials of life, who hallows his every act by

doing it to the glory of God, who learns to do all things through Christ that strengthens him, and to bear all things which in his service he may encounter.

Surely, Brethren, he that thus believeth "shall not make haste." Tribulation he shall have in this world, but "he is of good cheer—for Christ has overcome the world." Sorrows will fall to his share as to the lot of all men, but "he sorrows not as those who have no hope." Trials must come, trials and afflictions which checker the life of all; but he remembers, that God "chooseth his people in the furnace of affliction;" and he meets all that life can bring him, of duties or trials or temptations, clad in the impenetrable armour of the Gospel of peace: "As thy day so shall thy strength be;" "My grace is sufficient for thee." Trials are but God's discipline for our good: "he chastens those whom he loves." He who thus believeth shall not be thrown down from his trust in God, not be robbed of that peace which reposes in his love and faithfulness; he cannot become the plaything of every puff of adversity or prosperity; and—restive under God's providence, impatient of his discipline, forgetful of all the everlasting guarantees he rests on and the manly determination that has marked out his course—be driven to the mad career of presumption, or cast into the slough of despondency.

Such is indeed the steadfastness of the believer. This makes him truly great and manly in the vicissitudes of life: "he shall not make haste"

But, Brethren, who of us will boast of such unfaltering, all-governing faith? Who is there, that should not be moved to self-examination and better resolutions by the words of our text?

To the believer we give it as a *test*, to try his faith, its truth and vitality. The unbeliever we point to it, as the only way to that manliness, without which our life and all its purposes and aims must prove a failure.

Is it not want of faith, which is the root of all that murmuring against God's providence, that impatience at delay and the frustration of our plans, that repining under the pressure of misfortunes and losses and reverses? of that hasty spirit which charges our losses upon others, and finds relief in censure and distrust? which acts upon the impulse of the moment and forms its conclusions from the passing events of the day, judges of the favour of God by a success and of his displeasure by a reverse? which allows itself to be tossed about by changes which meet us in our earthly life, and rushes with equal thoughtlessness or recklessness—now into presumption on the crest of a prosperous wave—again into utter despondency, aye sinks down in despair, when the billows rise above us and seem ready to swallow us up.

In all this, Beloved—even humanly speaking—there is no principle except our fickleness and unbelief; there is no firmness, no greatness, no manliness; certainly there is no faith. Submission, meek submission, which looks upon the Divine sufferer on the cross and humbly prays "Thy will, not mine be done." Patience, which takes its pattern from our long-suffering Saviour, and remembers that he is not slack concerning his promises, but defers them in mercy to us, and to strengthen our faith, to root it more deeply and draw it out in richer fruits. Calmness and self-possession—though all should be dark around and all earthly promises fail; for above the storm that threatens, rules the same Lord at whose word the waves of Gennesareth were smoothed and the winds hushed into silence. Charity towards all who may have failed and been unfortunate—knowing that it is God's providence, not man's, which shapes the events, and that it is not a noble mind which covets a victim. Steadfast hope when all others lie trembling, because that hope rests on God. And instead of falling into despair, and giving up and sacrificing all in pusillanimity or personal spite, *manly action*, which meets the stern reality with courage and, in reliance on God's help, and trusting to his mercy, begirts itself to the work before him, and redeems the time by using every lawful means and making every reasonable exertion to do his duty and accomplish his purpose. Such, I say, are the marks of the true man, of the Christian, of the believer; who shall not make haste, but persevere under trials and against difficulties till his work is done; and who can never fail—even though here on earth he should find no other triumph but the martyr's crown.

This is the true lesson of life, the secret of our failure or success, our victory or defeat in the problem of our existence. Without this faith we but hasten to destruction. It is the lesson I would bring you on this day, the meditation most suited as a preparation for the work of the new year, which in God's mercy we have been permitted to see.

Life has brought to us all "labor and sorrow" and demands all our manliness. As we look back and consult the experience of the past, and look forward and fain would ask of the coming year its hopes and fears, its joys and sorrows: we shall not find a more important and useful truth than that of my text. The lessons of the last year may be humiliating and sad, and we all more or less have been suffering from that haste which is so inconsistent in the true believer; the prospect of the future may be dark—it is all the more necessary that we should arm ourselves for its coming days with that faith which alone enables us "to stand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand."

The assertion of the text applies to *our inner life*, the hidden life of the soul in the sight of God, its growth amidst the many spiritual trials and temptations and disappointments and drawbacks which belong

to our training and probation-life. And it applies to *life in all its forms* and *all its demands upon the individual*, in our daily tasks and each one's peculiar sphere. And oh! as I see so many rushing along wildly, without a steadfast and a godly principle; see them entering the new year, with its unknown events, without the support of faith, without the guide of a heavenly light, hastening on upon the dictates of their own wisdom, throwing aside the alone support for their labouring spirits, yielding to the tyranny of the moment and the power of mere circumstances, to fall into murmuring or impatience, into recklessness to enjoy the present moment and stake their all upon it, "*après nous le déluge*,' because they have no hopes resting upon a sure and lasting foundation; into despondency and despair, because they have lost sight of God's overruling providence and merciful promises—dwindling down in their own puny selves, and shivering in terror at the trials which give strength to the brave: I would throw myself in the breach, throw myself in their way, and stem their downward course by raising *the banner of faith* and saying, "he that believeth shall not make haste."

But conscience bids me make a further application of my text this day The year that is passed has brought us untold sorrows and trials as a people. Reverses have followed us in many parts of our country, and the year opens with dark and threatening clouds, which have cast their shadow over every brow. What we need is *a stout heart* and a *firm, settled mind;* and oh! may we AS A NATION remember, "he that believeth shall not make haste."

I trust I'll be forgiven the introduction of this subject. God forbid that I should speak as a mere man and not as the minister of Christ, that I should introduce politics where Religion alone should raise her voice, discuss measures and men where only principles can be laid down It is as God's messenger that I speak and preach his gospel in the faith, which is the alone principle that can steady our course and raise our hearts in hope. We preach to men under the circumstances in which we find them placed in God's providence; we bring them the appeals and the comforts of God's word according to their wants, their peculiar duties and trials. That most godly man, than whom no one was further removed from desecrating the pulpit with politics, that most uncompromising preacher of the gospel in its purity and holiness, the apostolic Bishop Meade—with his prophetic eye upon the struggle in which he knew the very existence of his beloved State would be involved, in which he foresaw the trials that would befall us and how the faith of many would wax cold in the hour of danger, who anticipated what all combatants for truth and liberty have experienced in their struggle, reverses and despondency, and perhaps defection; but whose faith never wavered as to the justice of our cause and the ulti-

mate victory of truth and right—he foretold his ministers that the time might come when it would be their duty to encourage the timid, and by their proclamation of God's truth, uphold the cause and strengthen the hands of the faithful; and on his dying bed besought us to do our duty and boldly proclaim our message. In his spirit, and in obedience to my heavenly Master's call, I would raise my voice in this the darkest day of our struggle, and—in the only way in which I can do my duty as a Christian patriot—speak to all, people and rulers, administration and legislation, soldiers and citizens, to all whom God has called into this fearful conflict, to all upon whose faithfulness and manly course our cause under God depends, and beseech them to *rally on that faith* which alone can bear us through, and steady our hearts, and nerve our arms, and give us souls patient and enduring and loyal, and lift us from our danger and despondency to nobler resolutions and brighter hopes. "He that believeth shall not make haste."

What is it that makes the present crisis so painful?

Our reverses? NO, BRETHREN. For great as they have been, (and no honest man would hide their extent,) we have had reverses before, and God always has blessed them to us, made them the source of greater harmony among ourselves, roused us to new and greater exertions, and taught us to bear them and repair them as men. What makes the present crisis so painful and so perilous lies not in what the enemy has done to us with his armies, but in *what our own coward, faithless, selfish hearts may do.* The all but general despondency, the lack of faith in ourselves and in God's assistance, the haste with which, from want of faith, many would rush to this or that wild expedient, though at the sacrifice of all that first armed us to the battle, some perhaps at the sacrifice of honour and truth;* the mutual recrimination which

---

* After the terrible defeat of the Roman legions at Heraclea in their first decisive encounter with Pyrrhus, Rome was thrown into the greatest alarm, and Pyrrhus desired to avail himself of this to secure the fruits of his victory. His shrewd minister, the diplomatic Cineas, "whose tongue had won him more battles than his own sword," was sent there, and by his address gained the most dangerous influence. Although the terms he had to offer were stringent and ruinous to Rome's position, yet he so played upon their fears, and won upon them by his insinuating ways, that he would have persuaded the Senate to submit to these terms if it had not been for one man. "This was Appius Claudius, the Censor. He was now in extreme old age; he had been blind for many years, and had long ceased to take part in public affairs. But now, when he heard of the proposed surrender, he caused himself to be conducted to the Senate-house by his four sons and his five sons-in-law, and there, with the authoritative eloquence of an oracle, he confirmed the wavering spirits of the fathers, and dictated the only answer worthy of Rome—that *she would not treat of peace with Pyrrhus till he had quitted the shores of Italy.*" The dying patriotism of Appius saved

charges our reverses here or there, and with unyielding prejudice sows discord, when our very existence is in danger; the hopelessness of many, which is ready to give up and sink into sullen despair, and withholds the needful help at the most critical time, and spreads the spirit of dissatisfaction and despondency, and would not shrink even from poisoning the minds of those who are the great bulwark between ourselves and destruction: *it is this*, the fear that we may not be true to ourselves because we are faltering in our faith in God, which presents the dangerous aspect of our present crisis. Oh! if we could take with us into the new year the lesson of our text; if we could stop every croaker and nerve every patriot; if we could allay every impatience and rouse all to bear what others have borne before, and drive away their unmanly fears by trust in God, by truly, prayerfully committing themselves and the country into His hands from whom alone cometh our help, and urge them on, TO DO AND BEAR, to brave their dangers and endure their privations, to be true men and act as such: the threatening dangers with which the year opens upon us would in God's mercy be changed into blessings, and this year witness the growth of our national strength and our training for the final victory! "He that believeth shall not make haste." If this sentiment was realized by all—rulers and people alike—and followed up in a God-fearing spirit, submitting to his chastisements and learning the lessons of adversity in patience and calm, courageous resolution, in mutual bearing and forbearing, in that manliness which yields where the good of the country requires it, and subordinates self to the high and holy cause in which we are engaged, in that devotion which consecrates all and sacrifices all to the will of God and the common good—if our prayers could effect this, there would be no cause left for fear; but from our reverses we would rise in new strength, and—against whatever dangers and by however slow degrees—enter upon that course which must bring victory and peace! It would give us *that true courage* which shines most conspicuously when all looks threatening, which becomes calm in danger and perseveres to the last, faithful to principle; which rests impregnably upon the rock of faith, and there finds strength to do all things and bear all things in the discharge of duty.

(1.) "He that believeth shall not make haste." This does not exclude work; it includes it. Haste is opposed to proper speed, to the

---

Rome. May his spirit descend upon our Senate, our rulers, our people! "Cineas returned to Pyrrhus baffled and without hope." He told his master that "to fight with the Roman people was like fighting with the Hydra;" he declared that "the city was as a temple of the Gods, and the Senate an assembly of kings." And the people upheld them, and Pyrrhus read his doom in the firmness of the Romans under defeat.

conscientious and judicious use of the proper means, opposed to the faithful discharge of duty. It is true "not by might, nor by power, but by my Spirit, saith the Lord;" but this excludes only a reliance on a might and a power which is not sanctioned by God—a might and power of their own, which the faithless in their haste substitute for that might and power of God's Spirit which shall accomplish his work in his own good time by the legitimate means of man's activity and faithful, persevering labor.

Here we have the true principles: *the conscientious, diligent use of means, but of means which God has sanctioned, and which his Spirit blesses.* When we speak of trust in God, we do not advocate superstition or fanaticism. The day of miracles is passed. No legions from above shall descend, and, as in the legends of old, lead our armies. No miraculous interposition can be looked for to terminate our struggle or give us by a sudden supernatural visitation the victory, which we were not faithful enough to achieve by the judicious and honest use of the means placed in our hands, the power entrusted us. God everywhere works by means; he blesses them, he gives them success, but only when they are used in accordance with his design; and only upon their use can we count on his blessing. God helps those who help themselves, who through faith in him rise with their work and to their work. Just as every Christian *trusts* as if God did everything and he nothing, but he also *works* as if the whole success rested upon that, and *he can work*, for he knows "it is God that worketh in him to will and to do."

Yes, Brethren, here must be our strength. We took an estimate of our means and our strength when we entered upon this war. Let us take a new census for this year, honestly, conscientiously. Let us count all that can be and ought to be in the army; all the resources we have the command of, we can husband and increase; all the wealth with which in God's mercy we yet are blessed, and which no less than our lives and our children's lives are due to the service of the country, which others have often sacrificed on its altars, and which it would be folly to attempt to save at the risk of the ruin of the country which alone can shield us in its possession; which we must part with when we part with our liberty and independence. Let us add every motive of honour and solemn pledges and patriotism; the prospect of the alternate issue of success or defeat; and then throw into the scale that faith in God which those should have who fight in a just cause, who defend their altars and their homes, the lives and honour of their wives and children; who would be craven could they shrink from any sacrifice to save all that man holds dear and sacred; those who indeed would humble themselves before God and acknowledge the justice of their chastisement, yet who trust to his overruling providence, and put themselves under his protection, and

commit their all to Him in whose hands are the issues of life and death and the destinies of nations, "who can save by many or by few;" and who are resolved in His name, and by His help, to do their whole duty and never weary in its discharge, and endure to the end, faithful unto death: and Brethren, is it for such to make haste and through unbelief deny their every premise and give up their every hope, and turn from their lofty goal in selfish fear, in weak despair? Away with faint-heartedness! "Heart within and God o'erhead!" Let us do our duty, be faithful in our work, and we can safely leave results with God! The might and power which our enemies bring against us, are not the might and power of God's Spirit, we may be sure—except so far as they are permitted to chasten us for our sins and train us for the hardships of a godly warfare. Trust in his Spirit and in his might and gracious promises; and that trust shall buoy us up to do our part in the work of our deliverance and independence. Oh! when I recollect what others have done in the struggle for their liberty and existence, the sacrifices they have brought,* the gigantic energy which even the aggressor and the

---

* I would once more, by way of illustration, refer to the history of Rome. Her stern and unyielding patriotism in the best days of the Republic, and when struggling for her existence, has never been surpassed. The invasion of Hannibal reduced her to straits similar to those which form our present crisis. What was her course? The campaigns of 218, 217, and 216, with the defeats on the Trebia, the Lake Trasimene, and the crushing blow at Cannæ, where her legions were all but annihilated, the defection of all Southern Italy, and the dread of "*Hannibal ante portas*" had reduced her to the last extremities. In that terrible battle 40,000 Romans (at the lowest calculation) had fallen, and 3,000 horse, involving the death of some of the wealthiest and most distinguished citizens, with one Consul, both the Proconsuls, both the Quæstors, 21 out of 48 Tribunes, and not less than 80 Senators among the slain. History does not record any defeat more complete, and very few more murderous. The first step was to guard against the results of a general panic. "The Senate instantly met, and at the motion of Fabius each Senator was invested with the power of a magistrate: they were to prevent all public lamentations; to hinder the people from meeting in the Forum, lest they should pass resolutions in favor of peace; to keep the gates well guarded, suffering no one to pass in or out without a special order"—for fear of the approach of Hannibal, &c., &c. Then came their resolute course towards the enemy. Hannibal, too wise to lead his insufficient force at once against Rome itself, opened negotiations and "sent ten of the chief men among his prisoners with offers to hold all whom he had taken to ransom. The Senate, on motion of T. Manlius Torquatus, a man who had inherited the stern decision of his ancestor, refused to admit the messengers to the audience, and ordered all to return, as they had bound themselves, to Hannibal's camp." No compromise there; and this uncompromising spirit was accompanied by commensurate acts. Fabius, with the coolness of age and experience, directed their measures, and M. Claudius Marcellus, "the sword of Rome," was sent to the command of the fugitives and stragglers, whom Varro—the unfortunate leader at Cannæ—

conqueror developes, must I not say, here is our path and here our duty?

---

was trying to rally, with young Scipio and other Tribunes. Levies were ordered in Rome and Latium; and as owing to the terrible losses of the last three campaigns, (at least 80,000 Romans and allies,) the regular levies were proceeding slowly, the Dictator, M. Junius, proposed to buy 8000 slaves from their masters to serve as light troops; and also to enroll debtors, prisoners and other persons, by law uncapable of serving in the Roman legions. The Senate was replenished by the bravest and the worthiest citizens, and a new army was put in the field for the next campaign, under the Consuls T. Sempronius Gracchus and L. Posthumius, (and afterwards Fabius Maximus,) Marcellus and Varro retaining a command as Proconsuls.

But the vast expenses demanded extraordinary exertions; and no means was spared during this and the succeeding years to call out the full strength of the country, its wealth and resources. Early in the war the Senate had merely doubled all existing imposts, and the commanders in Sicily, Sardinia and Spain, were ordered to subsist their troops from the resources of those countries. But in the year after Cannæ, their commanders reported that they were destitute of all things—money, food and clothing. It is curious and instructive to see how the exigency was met. We quote from Liddell's admirable compendium of Roman history: "Upon this the Senate proposed to the contractors to supply the required stores and wait for payment till the end of the war, it being understood that whatever was shipped from Italy was to be paid for, whether the vessels reached their destination or not. This offer was readily accepted; but some of the contractors were guilty of a fraud, disgraceful enough at any time, but at a time when the State was struggling for very existence, utterly detestable. These wretched men put a quantity of worthless stores on board crazy vessels, which were purposely lost on their passage, and then claimed payment in full, according to their contract." ["*Mutato nomine*," &c.—HORACE Sat. I, 1, 70.] "The fraud, however, was discovered, and these unworthy citizens were obliged to seek refuge in dishonorable exile. Contracts taken on such terms were, in fact, a loan to the State. The contractors advanced their property for the service of the State, and received in exchange a ticket promising them payment at some future time. Till then they lent their goods and held her promissory note as a security. In the same manner, the owners of the 8000 slaves who were enlisted by Gracchus, gave up their slaves to the State, and waited for payment till the Treasury was replenished."

"In the following year (214) the Senate was obliged to borrow money in a more direct form. The fortunes of minors and widows, which were in the hands of guardians or trustees, were now advanced to the State, all the expenses incurred on the part of the owners being discharged by orders upon the Treasury. These treasury bills (as they may be called) were probably taken in payment by the tradesmen and others, who did not press to have them exchanged for the coin, till it was convenient for the Treasury to do so. In these loans, it does not appear that the State allowed any interest upon the goods or money advanced. It is probable that the bills or orders upon the Treasury continued in use as money, as our Bank-notes."

"In the same year an extraordinary measure had been taken for manning the fleets. All citizens, except the poor, were required to furnish one or more sea-

(2.) Yes, Brethren, "he that believeth shall not make haste;" for his faith will teach him not only to act and do the necessary work and make the requisite exertions, it will also nerve him *to endure and bear all that must be borne.* Really I am the last person that would underrate our sufferings and the sacrifices that have been brought; yet let us remember we are not the only ones that have thus been called on to suffer. How true are the words of the present Governor of South Carolina, when in his Inaugural he said: "Other nations, for lesser purposes, have striven longer, endured more than we have, and won for themselves imperishable honour. Let us not hesitate in our purpose, or falter in its execution." Aye, Brethren, no nation ever gained its freedom without suffering; and had we time to refer to the facts of history, we could easily show how true it is that others have suffered more and struggled longer.* *And shall we lack the faith to bear us out*

---

men, with six months' pay and their full accoutrements. Senators were called upon to equip eight, and the rest in proportion to their rated property. Such was the Roman 'Ship-money.'"

But the war continued and the necessities increased. The coinage was lowered in value; but of course this only raised the price of all articles to meet the change, and public credit was shaken. New taxes seemed impossible. "The Senate met to deliberate, and the Consul Lævinus proposed (210 B. C.) that the great Council should set an example of patriotic devotion. "Let us," said he, "contribute all our treasure for the service of the State. Let us reserve—of gold, only our rings, the bullæ worn by our sons, and for the ornaments of our wives and daughters one ounce apiece,—of silver, the trappings of our horses, the family salt-cellar, and a small vessel for the service of the gods, —of copper, five thousand pounds for the necessity of each family." This proposal was carried by acclamation, and the noble example followed emulously by all the people. So eager was the throng which pressed to the Treasury, that the clerks were unable to make a full register of the names. This patriotic loan saved the State; and it was even more valuable in the spirit which it called forth, than for the actual relief which it afforded to the Treasury." Thus people act when they are in earnest, and such earnestness ensures success. In 204 B. C. the State was able to repay all and cancel every obligation.

* See the preceding note. Remember how Athens gave up her city for the salvation of Greece, transported her women and children to Ægina and Trœzene, and sent her men to man "the wooden walls" which the Oracle had pronounced their safety, and in which they gained the battle of Salamis. Remember the siege of Tyre and Sidon and other cities, and their heroic defence—the like of which this war has not yet seen; the retreat of the French from Moscow, the crossing of the Berezina; the rear-guard under Ney, whose heroic endurance yet stands unrivalled. Think of the long, long, bloody resistance, hoping against hope, and nursed only amidst reverses and sufferings and persecutions with fire and sword, of the Netherlands; of the unequal struggle for seven years of our forefathers, without means and resources but their own stout hearts, their fixed determination, and their trust in God. Can we forget such lessons? such lessons above all as are read us in Hebrews 11th chap. v. 35–38?

in our struggle? in our struggle for liberty and honour, and wealth and independence, and a glorious future? for wife and children and home, and all we hold dear and sacred? for truth and our altars? for our lives and very existence? Ah, he who here can make haste, and rush either into submission or despair, and give up when such is the stake—he who can make haste in the foolish hope of saving himself when the country is perishing, God have mercy upon his poor, miserable soul; but let him be as a beacon-light to warn off every honest son of his country, and teach us to seek that steadfastness and loyalty which true faith ensures.

Let us confess it, brethren, there has been no nation which has started upon her career of freedom with such boastfulness, and looked upon her struggles as so transient, her victory as so easily achieved, as ours. Shall we be found boasters indeed, vain boasters?

There have been many whose great stimulant was not the principle of national freedom and the sacred cause of constitutional and inalienable rights, but the aspiration for wealth and power and a great new empire. But "pride goeth before a fall"—can we wonder that such a fall should overtake us? But shall we be cast down and not rather take it as a solemn, painful lesson to profit by, and be led to the true and only foundation of all right and hope and prosperity? Shall it be said of us, that "we begun to build and were not able to finish?"

The question resolves itself into this: Shall we be of the number of those who, in the crucible of affliction, were found wanting, and proved themselves unworthy of the prize they fought for? or, shall we be of those who, through trials and fiery persecution, endured and glorified God, and honoured themselves and blessed their country by remaining faithful, and in every danger proved themselves true men, brave men, Christian heroes?

Yes, *Christian heroes!* For however the worldling, the infidel, and all "who make haste," may sneer at it, the only true basis, the only perfect guarantee for loyalty and faithfulness in our earthly relations and earthly duties, is FAITH IN GOD. This is as true as the word of God is true. Let us be Christians, let us acknowledge our relation to God, let us realize him as our covenant God and Father; let us do our duty as in His sight and to His glory, in His faith and His strength, and in obedience to His will, *and we cannot, we shall never fail!* "Some trust in chariots and some in horses; but we will remember the name of the Lord our God. They are brought down and fallen: but we are risen and stand upright"

Can we take these promises—which in their fullest sense belong to the Church of God—can we take them to ourselves? Can we apply them to our cause and country? Brethren, the answer to this question

rests with YOU. Oh! if we individually place ourselves under his protection and his guidance; if we individually try to do our duty, and our whole duty—do it wherever we may be placed, because we fear to sin against God; if his servants, watching for souls, can on their rounds from house to house and town to town, from post to post and corps to corps, call out to each other "all is well," we need not fear; and the more this spirit spreads, the safer our condition.

The new year has opened upon us. What shall it bring?

The horoscope is easily cast. There are but two alternatives. If, indeed, we give up our faith, and with it our strength, and every high motive and soul-elevating hope, our ruin is certain—we would be hastening to it. Nor would such a nation be worth saving; they would not be fit to use their success to God's glory and their own good. But if we stand in His faith, and, dependent upon His help, continue to labour and to work, and having done all, commit ourselves and our cause to Him, then, whatever the temporal issues may be, we cannot perish; we can still say, in the fullest assurance of faith, "The Lord of hosts is with us, the God of Jacob is our refuge."

Dear Brethren, I look for brighter days in the new year. I trust in God's mercy, and hope he will send us his blessing.

I cannot despair of our cause, which in my heart of hearts I believe to be the cause of right and truth. I will not believe that our people are so craven, so lost to all that ever has distinguished them, as to forget and betray their pledge of wealth and life and sacred honour to their country's cause.*

I do believe, that under God's blessing the right means will be used, and used conscientiously, zealously and quickly; that the people are sufficiently determined to endure and to persevere; that both our

---

*I think the literature given to our people chiefly in the daily newspapers should be of an encouraging and inspiring, not a depressing and often demoralizing tendency; of a character to unite them in the great cause, and not to excite and spread disaffection. This applies especially to our armies. Our soldiers are different from all others; they are no mercenaries, no mere machines. They are our equals, and will think and judge for themselves. What a solemn responsibility to guide that judgment aright! In numbers we will always be inferior—no matter; for it is minorities which always have achieved the greatest triumphs. But in their spirit, their patriotic convictions and motives and hopes, we have an overbalancing superiority. Let that spirit be to all a sacred thing; for if once this foundation of our strength were sapped, the issue would be fearful. Thank God for the religious life which has spread in our army, for the blessing of His grace which has ennobled so many of our soldiers. As long as men are faithful soldiers and servants of the Lord Jesus against sin, the world and the devil: so long they will be faithful to their country, faithful in every duty, "they shall not make haste."

administrative and our legislative authorities will so act as to restore and increase confidence. Errors have been committed, failures have been made—where in the history of the world has this not been the case? Who is exempt from them? But it is not a generous spirit which hunts down its victims. When C. Terrentius Varro had by his imprudence and bad generalship lost the fatal battle of Cannæ and brought the Republic to the verge of ruin, after he had delivered the fugitives he had rallied at Venusia and Casilinum into the hands of his successor, himself set out to Rome to make a personal report of his conduct. With what feelings he approached the city may be imagined. But as he drew near, the Senate and people went out to meet him, and publicly thanked him "for that he had not despaired of the Republic." Saith the Roman historian: "History presents no nobler spectacle than this. Had he been a Carthaginian general, he would have been crucified." Which code shall Christian nations adopt?

Errors, grave errors have been committed, no doubt. Only let us acknowledge the hand of God even there, even in our failures; and let us remember that the great error, the great difficulty is *in us*, in ourselves, in our own faithless hearts, and sinful lives, and selfish fears, and hasty judgments; and oh! I do pray and hope that God will have mercy upon us, and give us better minds and stout hearts and unfailing faith, that shall not make haste, that shall win the prize. But if we fall, let us fall with our faces upward, our hearts turned to God, our hands in the work, our wounds in the breast, with blessings—not curses - upon our lips; and all is not lost! We have retained our honor, we have done our duty to the last, and lived and died as the servants of God, lived in faith and died in the hope of glory.

But this bright new year's sun, this glorious Sabbath-morn which ushers it in amidst the prayers and praises of God's people—it does not augur failure or defeat. It rises like a star of hope upon the dark clouds in which the last year has set, and I do believe that our present reverses are tokens, not of God's anger and his abandonment of our cause, but a merciful discipline, a fatherly chastisement for our sins, to make us more humble before him and dependent on his alone saving grace, more earnest and single-hearted in the duties of our life; to call forth the latent energies that still sleep within us and shall wake at the touch of his Omnipotent hand, and arm our souls with unconquerable strength by faith in his promises, and by the prayers which shall ascend to the throne of grace and bring down his blessing upon us

Beloved Brethren, let us devote ourselves, our souls and body, to his service, and bring to his altar the sacrifice of all we have and all we are. Let this be the resolution with which we enter the new year, that His we will be, and His shall be our heart and strength and time and

wealth and life. Let us bear our present trials as His dispensation, and therefore "quit us as men and be strong," and "not make haste!" Let us make it our sacred duty to uphold and increase—not to shake or undermine, public confidence; but forgetting all enmities and jealousies, surrendering all prejudices and selfish aims, join hand and heart, and as a band of brothers, enlisted in Christ's service, let us seal our vows of loyalty to God and man, our country, and our every duty, in the holy sacrament to which the day invites us! And may God smile upon us and give us his blessing, and crown the year with his mercy and goodness, and beautify us with his salvation!